

Application No. 09/400,833
Response dated December 8, 2003
Reply to Office Action of September 26, 2003

REMARKS

Claims 2, 3, 19 and 20 are pending in this application. No new claims have been added.

Claim Objections

Claims 20, 2, 3, and 19 were objected to for incongruous titling. Claims 20, 2, 3, and 19 are corrected to cure these objections.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC§102

Claims 2, 3, 19 and 20 were rejected under 35 USC§102(b) as being anticipated by Akimoto et al.

Carriage table 32, arm 35 and fork 36 of Akimoto et al. move along the directions “X” and “Y,” but they cannot move **above** carrier station 1 and processing section 10. See Fig. 2 of Akimoto et al. Since they move only inside the depressed portion provided with transfer path 31 as shown in Fig. 2, carriage table 32, arm 35 and fork 36 cannot move **above** carrier station 1 and processing section 10. The last recitation in claim 20, that is, “wherein said traveling body is moved above the product-housing section and the material-housing section on the workpiece-storage device,” makes the present invention distinct from Akimoto et al. The rejection under 35USC§of claim 20 is unsupported by Akimoto et al. Reconsideration of the rejection is respectfully requested.

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In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, Applicant submits that claims 2, 3, 19 and 20, as herein amended, are in condition for allowance. Applicant requests such action at an early date.

If the Examiner believes that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension or any other fees that may be due with respect to this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,

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